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24 April 1961

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: The Situation in France and Algeria

In Algeria, insurgent leaders remain in control of most of the territory though it seems clear that large elements of the military there, as in France itself, have not fully declared themselves. There is yet no indication, however, that more loyal or passive elements would challenge the Legion and paratroopers in battle.

In France, the government actions on the night of 23 - 24 April appear to have reduced the prospects of successful invasion of France by the insurgent leaders--if indeed they actually intended such an invasion. These measures also seem to have stirred up the French

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popular will to resist--particularly among younger groups. The call up of military reservists continues. Other emergency measures are being relaxed, however--tanks and armored cars are being withdrawn from the city, roadblocks and airport barricades removed and commercial flights resumed at Paris airports.

De Gaulle is unlikely to give any ground to the demands of the revolutionary military junta. Over the next few days he will probably solicit acknowledgements of positive loyalty to him both by the general public and by prominent political leaders in an effort to discourage disaffections by now hesitant military officers. The junta leaders for their part will be probing for a support in units of metropolitan France and Germany. In the face of strong backing De Gaulle is likely to receive, we do not believe they will gain many additional adhesions.

If the military leaders in Algeria feel the success of their revolt threatened by isolation and by the blockade imposed by De Gaulle on April 22--which we believe will be effective--they may in the next day or so attempt an invasion of France proper, hoping to spark as yet uncommitted military elements on the continent to their cause. However, as time passes without decisive action in metropolitan France, the insurgent leaders are more likely to turn on the FLN rebel bases in Tunisia in a desperate attempt to commit France to an enlargement of the war.

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Director

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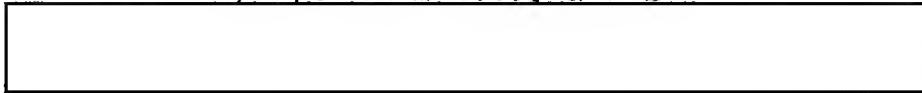
Hand-carried by Mr. Amory to DCI for signature, 24 April 1961

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